

BLM News

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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DATE: November 25, 2003
ELKO FIELD OFFICE: 2004-13
FOR RELEASE: November 25, 2003

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ELKO BLM EMPLOYEE RECEIVES NATIONAL FIRE AWARD

BLM Elko Fire Management Officer Joe Freeland recently received the **Excellence in Ecosystem Management Through Fuels Treatment Award** at the National Fire and Aviation Conference in Portland, Oregon.

The purpose of the award is to recognize a BLM employee, group, or unit who has substantially advanced a cooperative landscape level approach to ecosystem restoration through the use of treatments (such as mechanical, biological, prescribed fire, and wildland fire use). The work done must promote land health standards to restore healthy, diverse ecological systems.

When receiving the award, it was noted that under the leadership of Fire Management Officer Joe Freeland, the Office of Fire Management in the Elko Field Office has expended substantial effort in working with other Elko Field Office divisions and cooperating agencies in advancing the visibility and the success of fire management in northeastern Nevada.

As a result of Freeland's leadership, and largely due to his personal efforts, the Elko Office of Fire Management met a number of critical workload targets or objectives in Fiscal Year 2003.

Among them are:

- completing amendments of the Elko and Wells Resource Management Plans to address fire management;
- exceeding fuels treatments project goals in Fiscal Year 2003
- providing mentoring and training in fuels management for Elko's Fire Operations Specialists (Fire Station Managers), by assigning them the responsibility for managing all aspects of Wildland/Urban Interface fuels treatment projects;
- coordinating closely with other divisions in identifying vegetation treatment projects (e.g., restoration and rehabilitation, range improvement, noxious weed treatment);
- supporting fire prevention education, including hosting Student Conservation Association fire prevention teams in previous fiscal years;

- working with the Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group to expand members' knowledge of fire management; and
- working with the Western Shoshone Tribe and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to establish an effective fire management program for the Eastern Nevada Agency.

BLM Elko Field Manager Helen Hankins commented, "I'm extremely proud of the work done by Joe Freeland, the Elko Fire Operations staff, and all our employees who contributed to reaching our fuels treatment goals."

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